

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EXCHANGES: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS: COUNTRY MUSIC USA

REF: STATE 173504

1. GOSKONTSERT AND MINCULT OFFICIALS REVIEWED VTR OF COUNTRY MUSIC USA REHEARSAL AUGUST 12. THEY EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR OPRYLAND'S EFFORTS IN PREPARING VTR AND IN GENERAL WERE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH SHOW. THEY ADDED IT WOULD TAKE QTE MUCH WORK ON THEIR PART UNQTE MAKE SHOW COMPREHENSIBLE TO SOVIET AUDIENCES, BUT EXPRESSED THEIR COMMITMENT TO DO SO.

2. GOSK REVIEWING ALL ASPECTS COUNTRY MUSIC USA TOUR AND WILL CONSULT WITH EMBASSY THIS WEEK. FIRST COMMENT WAS THAT SHOW, IN ORDER BE MORE EASILY ABSORBED BY SOVIET AUDIENCES, SHOULD BE IN NO MORE THAN TWO MAIN PARTS WITH FORTY-FIVE MINUTES OF MUSIC IN EACH (RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE NARRATION AND ENCORES WOULD BE IN ADDITION). FIRST PART SHOULD BE TIGHTENED UP VERSION OF CMUSA SCRIPT'S FIRST FIVE PARTS DEPICTING HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF COUNTRY MUSIC, I.E., FIRST PART SHOULD END WITH COWBOY SECTION. SECOND PART SHOW SHOULD BE DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO CONTEMPORARY US COUNTRY MUSIC, I.E. MATERIAL FOLLOWING COWBOY SECTION.

3. WHILE REALIZING CHOREOGRAPHER HAD ONLY BEGUN WORK WITH GROUP, GOSK COMMENTED THIS WAS WEAKEST PART OF SHOW. THEY

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SUGGEST MINIMUM OF THREE DANCES IN EACH PART IN ORDER FOR

IT TO BE "SHOW" IN SOVIET PUBLIC'S UNDERSTANDING OF WORD.

4. GOSK/MINCULT UNDERSTAND PROBLEMS OF INTRODUCING ENTIRELY NEW ART FORM TO USSR BUT ARE WILLING DO ALL POSSIBLE BRING IT OFF. ROLE OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKING ANNOUNCER WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING SECURE BEST INDIVIDUAL POSSIBLE. ANNOUNCER WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY BECOME FAMILIAR WITH SHOW THROUGH VTR AND OTHER MATERIALS. GOSK OFFICIALS STRONGLY SUGGEST DIRECTOR OF SHOW PLAN ARRIVE IN MOSCOW MINIMUM THREE DAYS BEFORE GROUP DISCUSS FINAL CHANGES WITH THEM AND TO WORK WITH ANNOUNCER. EMBASSY SUPPORTS PROPOSAL. ADVISE.

5. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS, IN MAKING PROGRAM CUTS, MAXIMUM RETENTION OF VIRTUOSO INSTRUMENTAL SECTIONS AND POIGNANT, TOP-QUALITY SOLOS, WITH CUTS IN MEDLEY, CHORUS-TYPE SONGS WHERE NECESSARY.
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